

THE Mainstream

From The Director

As the spring thaw begins, homeowners and renters are advised to inspect pipes that have been vulnerable to this winter's frigid conditions.

Outside spigot piping that is visible just inside the exterior wall is the most susceptible to freezing, which may go unnoticed if not visually and manually inspected. If you can observe that the pipe has expanded, feel it with your hand. If you see or feel a bubble or crack in the pipe, make sure the water is off to this area and then have it repaired. This is normally an inexpensive repair compared to the damage that could be caused.

On a frost-free-type outside spigot, the homeowner will not realize damage has occurred until the water is turned on from the outside. Then water can leak or spray on the inside of the home causing damage, normally in the basement or crawl space.

Homeowners with sump pumps are advised to make sure their pumps and discharge piping are in working condition. As the snow starts to melt, it's necessary for the sump pump to do its job and pump the ground water to the storm sewer or ditch line. Pumping ground water to the sanitary sewer is prohibited. If you observe that your sump pump is not working and the sump well is full, problems could occur because the ground water has nowhere to go but through multiple areas of your basement walls near the floor, causing flooring or carpet damage. - Jeff Castro, YCUA Director

YCUA's Valve Turning Exercise Program to Begin in June

Beginning in June, YCUA Service Center crews will be conducting a conventional valve turning exercise program to maintain the quality and longevity of all water system valves. Being able to operate these valves at a moment's notice is extremely important. In an emergency, sections of a distribution system may need to be shut down without delay.

Conventional water system valve turning consists of closing, then opening each valve in a specific neighborhood. During this process, you might experience discolored water and sediment for a short period of time.

After valve exercising has been completed in your neighborhood, it may be necessary to purge your internal plumbing. Running several

cold taps at full force for a short period will usually flush out any discolored water in the home. If the water is not clear, wait one-half hour and repeat the process. Running water through an outdoor garden hose is also an effective way to flush out your service. It is also a good idea to

remove and clean out the screens on faucet aerators, which may have gathered particles during the valve exercising process.

If you experience continued abnormally low pressure and / or low flow volume throughout your house, please call the

number listed below. Valve exercising will normally take place from the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. For more information, please go to: www.ycua.org or call 734-484-4600 ext. 307.



A YCUA employee conducting a valve turning exercise.

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YPSILANTI COMMUNITY UTILITIES AUTHORITY

YCUA

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A semiannual newsletter dedicated to enhancing water and wastewater services brought to you by

YCUA Employees Donate Water to Flint Residents

YCUA recently organized the collection of bottled water donations from its employees to assist the residents of the City of Flint in response to the water crisis there. YCUA employees from every department responded to the call to action and donated water. YCUA partnered with the Washtenaw County United Way and UAW Local 898, who offered assistance in delivering the water to Flint as part of their Flint donation drive.



YCUA employees loading water donations for transport to Flint. Photo by Kristina Scarcelli.

The United Way of Genesee County has set up this fund for the purchase of filters, bottled water, emergency support services and prevention efforts. 100% of the fund is used for these projects

and no Administrative Fee is assessed. To donate to this fund, please visit unitedwaygenesee.org and click the Support The Flint Water Crisis link.



Flint residents receiving water donated by YCUA employees.

YCUA to Begin Cross-Connection Control Program

This spring and summer, YCUA will be conducting residential cross-connection surveys. A cross-connection involves an arrangement of piping or appurtenances through which backflow of non-potable water could flow into the public drinking water. An example is the common garden hose submerged in a swimming pool or a bucket of detergent or other sources that would contaminate the water supply.

When the proper conditions occur, water can backflow into the drinking water through a cross-connection. The two ways that contaminated water can backflow into the drinking water are backsiphonage and backpressure.

As required under the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act, 1976 PA 399 and the Michigan Plumbing Code, it is the responsibility of the water utility to implement a cross-connection program, the purpose of which is to help protect public health by preventing pollution and / or contamination of the drinking water delivered to a home or business.

Residential accounts in the YCUA service area will be surveyed by a Meter Service Technician and are done on external water spigots and irrigation systems only. A letter is sent only if there is a non-compliance issue. A follow up survey is made to ensure that non-compliance issues have been resolved.

Cross-connection surveys will take place between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

For more information, please go to: www.ycua.org, click on Residential Users, and then click on Cross-Connection and Backflow Prevention. Or, you can call 734-484-4600 ext. 325.



Photo by Kristina Scarcelli.

YCUA wants to assure its customers that their water is safe and that it meets all regulatory standards under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

YCUA Issues Statement on High Quality of Water in Ypsilanti Area

Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority (YCUA) distributes water and provides wastewater treatment services to approximately 27,000 homes and businesses in the City of Ypsilanti and the Charter Township of Ypsilanti and portions of Canton and York Townships. YCUA also provides water to Pittsfield, Superior, and Augusta Townships, which operate and maintain their own water distribution systems.

In the face of the Flint water crisis, YCUA wants to assure its customers that their water is safe and that it meets all regulatory standards under the Safe Drinking Water Act. YCUA obtains treated drinking water from the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), formerly the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD). GLWA's source water is the Detroit River and Lake Huron.

Lead enters drinking water primarily from corrosion or wearing away of materials in the water distribution system and household plumbing that contains lead. GLWA uses orthophosphate as a corrosion control inhibitor to keep our water safe and eliminate the risk of an incident like the one that occurred in Flint. Corrosion control forms a protective layer on the inside of plumbing materials by chemically binding with the pipes to prevent the dissolution of lead and other metals into the water.

Since 1992, GLWA (and before it, DWSD) and YCUA have tested for lead (and copper) in customers' homes that have plumbing that may contribute lead to the household water supply. During the late 1990s, at the direction of the State of Michigan, YCUA created an inventory of all known lead water service piping between the water main and the shut-off valve at homes and businesses in the City of Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township. For the last 20 years, YCUA has made it standard practice to replace all non-copper water service piping with new copper pipe between the water main and shut-off valve as part of all water main replacement projects for the City of Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township.

Water service replacement work by YCUA is limited to the length of pipe between the water main and the shut-off valve at a property line. YCUA reports that it has limited information showing what the pipe

material is on a property owner's side of a shut-off valve. However, if non-copper piping, such as galvanized or lead pipes, is observed during a water main replacement project, the property owner is notified in writing. Those notifications include the recommendation that the property owner consider replacing the service pipe between the shut-off and the owner's building.

Another important fact about lead in drinking water is that homes built between 1982 and 1988 may have copper piping with lead-based solder at the joints. In 1986, Congress enacted the "lead ban," which mandated that any installation or repair of drinking water plumbing connected to a public water system must be completed with "lead-free materials". By law, plumbing fixtures such as brass faucets, fittings, and valves purchased after January 2014 must contain only very low levels of lead.

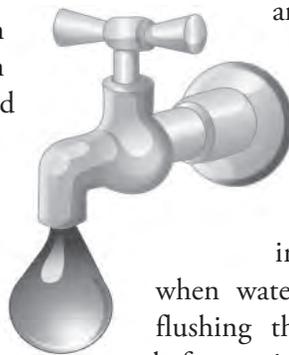
For customers who have older homes that may have lead service or copper pipes with lead solder, YCUA advises that the potential for lead and copper in drinking water can be minimized, when water has been sitting for several hours, by flushing the tap for 30 seconds to two minutes before using the water for drinking or cooking.

YCUA's most recent 2014 Consumer Confidence Water Quality Report can be viewed online by visiting <http://www.ycua.org/waterreport.pdf>. YCUA's 2015 report will be completed and widely published and circulated in mid-2016. DWSD's 2014 report can be viewed online at <http://www.detroitmi.gov/Portals/0/docs/DWSD/Water%20Quality%20Reports/2014WaterQualityReport.pdf>

Anyone with questions or concerns about their drinking water may contact YCUA at 734-484-4600 ext. 300.

Residents who wish to have their water tested privately can contact the National Test Lab in Ypsilanti, Michigan by calling 800-458-3330 ext. 3. The fee is approximately \$45. There are also several online home test kits available for \$10 to \$30.

The USEPA has a list of recommendations for those concerned about lead in their drinking water and maintains a Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791.



Did You Know?

YCUA's annual Consumer Confidence Drinking Water Quality Report will be mailed to you soon. After June 1, 2016, the new report will be viewable on our website at www.ycua.org/waterreport.pdf. Please call us at 734-484-4600 ext. 107 if you are unable to access the Internet and wish to continue having a paper copy of the report delivered to your home.



Water-Wise Tips For Your Spring Cleanup

Storm drains in our streets and yards empty directly into our lakes and streams. Fertilizer on our driveways and sidewalks washes directly to our lakes and streams polluting the water. Here are some simple lawn care tips for a great looking lawn that will also help protect our environment:

-  Don't pour your unwanted chemicals on the ground or down sinks. Instead, take them to a hazardous waste collection center.
-  It's important to use chemical fertilizers, weed killers, and fungicides only as directed. Do not apply these products if rain is expected or near surface waters.
-  Fertilizer left on sidewalks and driveways easily washes into storm drains. Sweep it back onto the lawn.
-  Don't hose your lawn clippings away - sweep them up instead.
-  Don't fertilize until three weeks after green up in the spring.
-  Consider a fertilizer spreader with a directional control that avoids non-lawn areas.
-  Instead of spreading weed killer over your entire lawn, use a pre-mixed spot treatment, directed at the root of the problem.

April is Safe Digging Month

April is Safe Digging Month in Michigan. Each year, Michigan's underground utility infrastructure is jeopardized by unintentional damage caused by those who fail to call before they dig.

Save time and money by calling 811, the national Call Before You Dig toll-free number, or MISS DIG System, Inc., Michigan's one-call excavation safety and utility damage prevention company, at 800-482-7171 at least three business days in advance of any digging project. By making this call, residents can have underground lines located to avoid the potential for undesired consequences such as service interruption, damage to the environment, personal injury and even death.

It is also important to practice safe digging by respecting the lines marked by the MISS DIG crews and maintaining visual definition of the line through the course of the excavation.

MISS DIG System Inc. offers free assistance with its more than 900 participating members who will stake underground utility lines and provide overhead electric line assistance prior to digging.



Need more information?
Please visit us at
www.ycua.org
or call
734-484-4600